

AKIRA

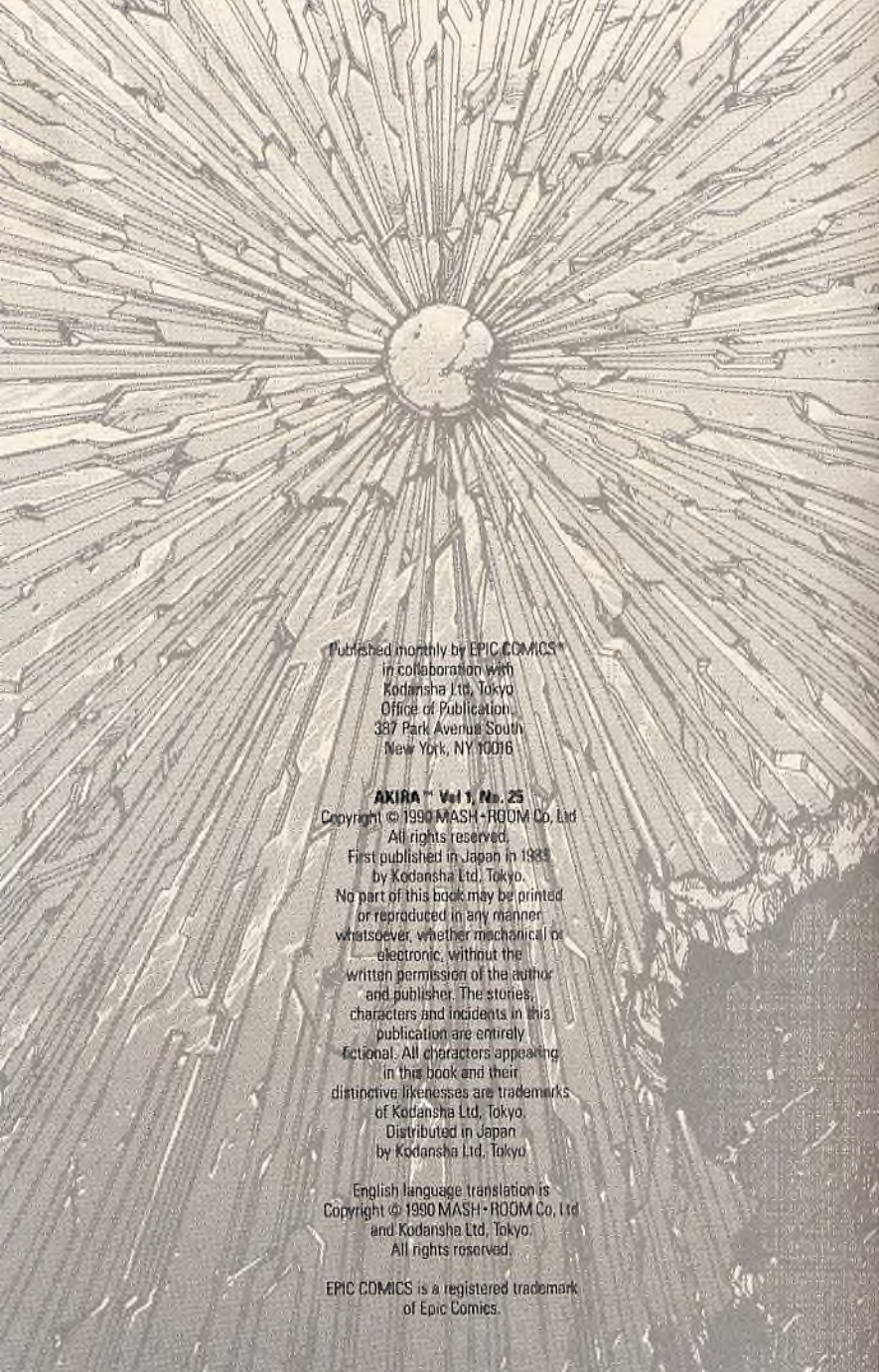
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KATSUHIRO OTOMO



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VISION UNDERGROUND

AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 25

VISION UNDERGROUND

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

Twenty-thirty. The world hovers on the brink of World War IV. **Kaneda**, leader of a band of teenaged delinquents, leads his friends into a restricted area—the section of **Neo-Tokyo** known as the “old city”, where, thirty-eight years before, the first of the bombs fell.

As a result, **Kaneda** and his friend **Tetsuo** become entangled in a power struggle between a mysterious military and scientific organization led by the **Colonel** and an underground resistance group bent on putting a stop to the Colonel's activities. Members of the resistance include **Kay**, **Ryu**, and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko**. Among their superiors is the blind **Lady Miyako**—a powerful religious leader with strong precognitive gifts.

The **Colonel** has a number of psychic children under his control. **Takashi**, **Kiyoko**, and

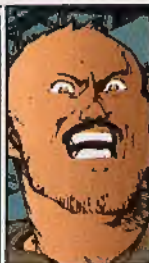
Masaru are identified by numbers marked on their hands. **Number 28** is **Akira**, so powerful that since the war he has been suspended in cryogenic sleep.

The Colonel's staff conducts experiments which awaken tremendous telepathic potential in **Tetsuo**, who is redubbed **Number 41**. Able to shrug off the most serious injuries, **Tetsuo** goes on a killing spree, even attacking **Kaneda**. Followed by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** seeks out **Akira**, whose powers he fears may rival his own. In hibernation, Akira's power responds to Tetsuo's psychic energy. When **Tetsuo** reaches Akira's resting place, the cryogenic chamber cracks from within and Akira—dazed and docile from his long sleep—emerges.

The **Colonel** summons the powerful SOL military satellite and orders that its laser cannon be fired at **Tetsuo** and **Akira**. The two are separated by the blasts. **Akira** is saved by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, but the laser strikes Tetsuo's left arm. Afterward, **Neo-Tokyo** is placed in a state of military emergency, with “caretaker robots” patrolling the streets and



Akira



The Colonel



Kai



Masaru



keeping order.

Akira and the resistance fighters are cornered by the Colonel's troops, but all seems well when **Takashi** fondly greets **Akira**. Then **Nezu**, a former resistance leader who has betrayed his own side, arrives. He tries to kill **Akira**, but kills **Takashi** instead.

The trauma of Takashi's death galvanizes **Akira**. He fully awakens and unleashes a light blast powerful enough to devastate the entire city.

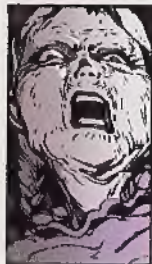
Masaru and **Kiyoko** sweep most of the people in the area upward. **Kaneda** is last seen vanishing toward the sky. Afterward, **Lady Miyako** opens her temple and offers shelter and comfort to those in need, gathering large groups of followers in the East.

Neo-Tokyo is completely cut off from the outside world. In the

western part of the city the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed—a monarchy with **Akira** as the figurehead and **Tetsuo** as his prime minister. Together the pair use their powers, healing the sick, wielding control of the faithful, and organizing their subjects into fighting units that destroy caretaker robots and conquer military and medical relief parties sent from the outside world. The **Empire** is eventually infiltrated by teams of spies from the outside.

Masaru and **Kiyoko** are sick with withdrawal from the drug which augments and channels mental powers, and when **Kiyoko**, whose powers are precognitive, tells **Kay** to find **Number 19**, **Lady Miyako** asks that **Kay** bring the other psychics to her when they are well.

Tetsuo's men kill most of the



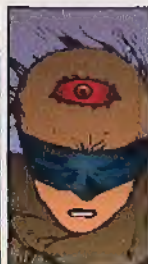
Kiyoko



Kaori



Ryu



Seer

spies from the outside, but their leader, **Lt. Yamada**, escapes when **Ryu** appears and leads him into the safety of an underground shelter. **Yamada** refuses to tell **Ryu** who has sent him. He does, however, reveal that Russia has conquered part of Japan, and that the American fear of **Akira** makes them reluctant to get involved.

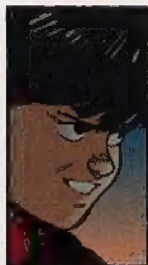
Tetsuo forces an orgy of sex and drugs on several young girls, only one of whom—**Kaori**—survives. Afterwards, **Tetsuo** looks into **Akira's** mind. He emerges a terrified wreck. When he recovers, he decides that **Lady Miyako** may be able to explain matters to him. Taking a dose of the power-enhancing medication, **Tetsuo** teleports to the temple of the religious leader. **Lady Miyako** recounts to him the experiments decades earlier which created the psychic children and reveals that the third World War was begun by a mental blast from **Akira**. She also warns **Tetsuo** that he alone can control **Akira's** near-inconceivable powers, but that he must first overcome his dependency on drugs. Disgusted and perplexed, **Tetsuo** returns to his stronghold. There he neglects his duties of state, concentrating

instead on trying to kick the habit.

Kay and **Chiyoko** try to move **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** to Lady Miyako's temple, but they are attacked by **Tetsuo's** followers, who escape with **Kiyoko**. **Chiyoko** rescues the girl, but is badly wounded. The two are brought to safety by the **Colonel**, who has been living in isolation. **Chiyoko**, delirious, tells the **Colonel** to take the child to the temple, where he'll also find **Masaru**.

Ryu and **Lt. Yamada** watch the **Empire** from hiding and are startled by an encounter with **Tetsuo**, whose withdrawal causes his powers to surge erratically. **Ryu** is even more startled when **Tetsuo** blurts out what his telepathy has shown him—that **Yamada** has come to assassinate **Akira**.

Tetsuo's lieutenant leads his army to Lady Miyako's temple, and they slaughter all in their path—monks, penitents and helpless refugees. They are however, thwarted by the power of Lady Miyako's psychically gifted monks and defeated when **Kay** captures their leader. **Lady Miyako** refuses to permit the execution of their enemies. **Tetsuo's** men depart alive, bitterly



Kaneda



Chiyoko



Lt. Yamada



Kay

swearing revenge. They return an hour later hungry for blood and victory.

Meanwhile, the **Colonel** has been wounded and nearly killed by soldiers of the **Empire**, but escapes alive. Shortly after **Tetsuo** returns to the shrine, maddened by the pain of withdrawal, the **Colonel** arrives and uses a remote control that enables him to fire a blast from the SOL satellite. **Tetsuo** unleashes a wave of devastating psychic power. During the mayhem this creates, **Kaneda** reappears, as if from nowhere.

Tetsuo takes another inner voyage, reliving both happy and painful episodes from his past, and seeing a vision of the double helix spiral that **Akira** constantly creates when he plays. Only **Kaori** is there to see **Tetsuo** return to the seat of the **Great Tokyo Empire** and bow down to his young lord. When their lieutenant returns, confesses his unauthorized attack on the shrine, and begs **Tetsuo** to help them overcome **Miyako**, **Tetsuo** refuses.

Aboard an American naval vessel, an international conclave of scientists assembles. They pool their knowledge of the **Akira** project, which they code-

name **Juvenile A**. Their data indicates that the effect of **Akira's** power is like that of the Big Bang—the force that created the universe—and that the most recent blast (**Tetsuo's**), lacked the scope and dimension of the earlier ones. They also theorize a link between the psychic blasts and the firing of SOL, over which the military is trying to regain control.

Kai leads **Kaneda** to a black market shop in the thieves' quarter of the city beyond **Miyako's** shrine. Leading the thieves is **Joker**, former leader of the **Clown** motorcycle gang, who were **Kaneda's** bitterest enemies. However, **Kaneda**, **Joker** and **Kai** agree to work together and avenge **Tetsuo's** crimes.

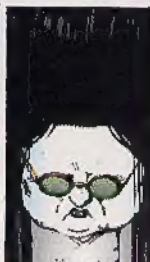
The **Colonel**, too, is after **Tetsuo**, blaming himself for the creation of what could turn out to be another **Akira**. **Kay** badgers him, hoping to make him reveal **Chiyoko's** whereabouts. The **Colonel** gives **Kay** a chance to join him, and the pair leave the shrine together. **Lady Miyako** is irate when she learns of this, and sends for **Kaneda**, imploring him to return with her "beloved" daughter."



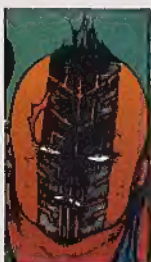
Tetsuo



Tetsuo's Aide

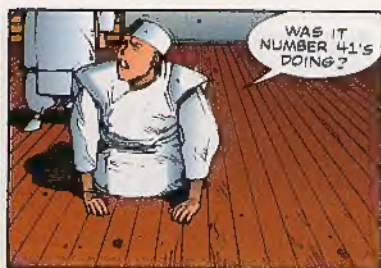
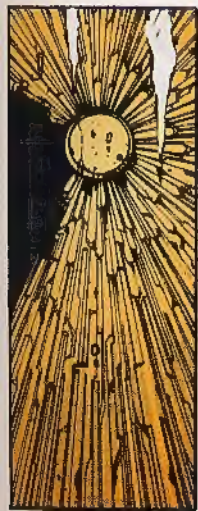


Lady Miyako



Joker





FIRST YOU SENT
FOR ME, AND NOW
YOU'RE TELLING ME
TO STAY BACK? I
DON'T HAVE TO
TAKE THAT SHIT!

THANK YOU
FOR BRINGING
H M!

HUH?

LADY
MIYAKO!

YOU MAY
LEAVE US
NOW.

THE WICKED OLD
WITCH CAME OUT
OF HIDING!

MY REQUEST IS A
SIMPLE ONE. I
WANT YOU TO LOOK
FOR KAY

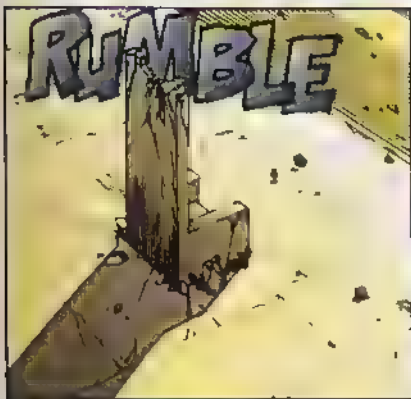
KAY'S NONE OF
YOUR BUSINESS.
IF I WANT HER,
THEN I'LL GO
AND FIND
HER!

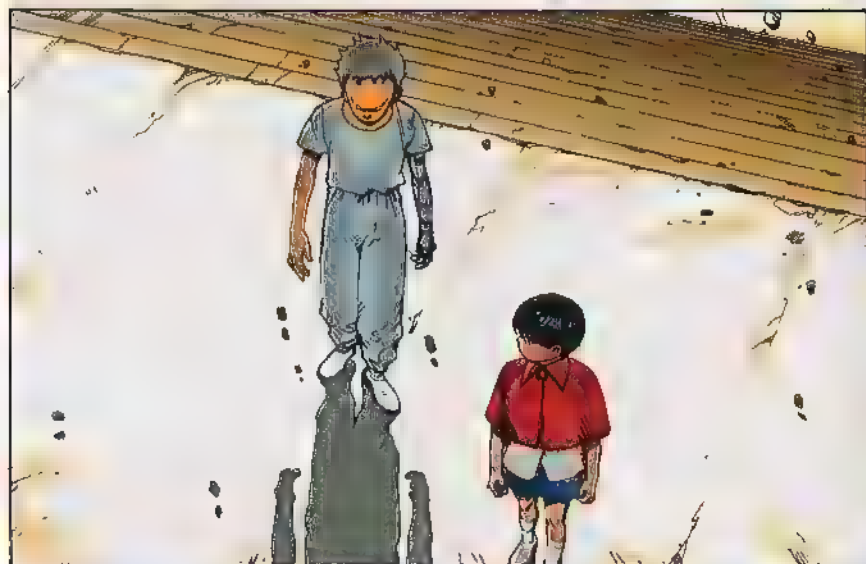
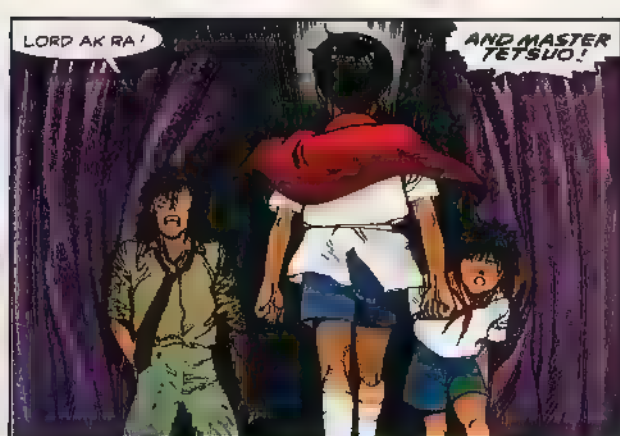
OF
COURSE YOU
WILL... BUT ..

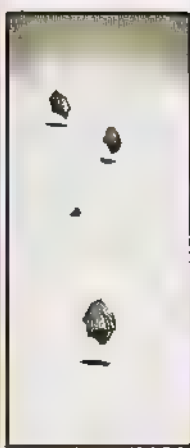
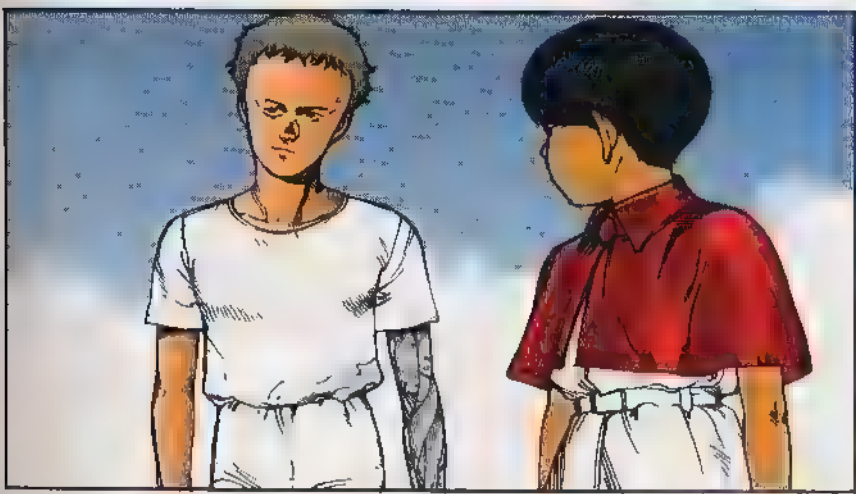
... SHE'S AS
PRECIOUS TO ME
AS THOUGH SHE
WERE MY OWN
DAUGHTER

I BEG
OF YOU
TO
BRING
HER
BACK.

PRECIOUS
DAUGHTER...







WITHOUT TELLING YOU OR LORD
AKIRA, I CALLED TOGETHER
OUR ARMY AND LED IT
AGAINST MIYAKO. ALL
OUR NUMBERS...

...AGAINST
HER FOLLOWERS BUT
THE REFUGEES CAME
TO HER
A.D.

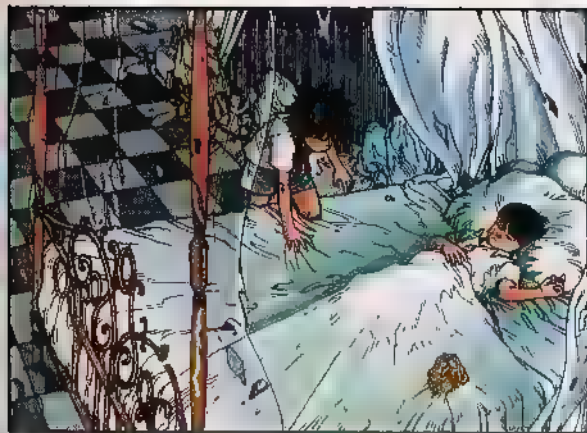
AND SOME OF HER PRIESTS
HAVE THE POWER. WE DIDN'T
HAVE ENOUGH. PLEASE
MASTER TETSUO! YOU'VE
GOT TO HELP US.

RIGHT NOW, I'M
TOO TRED.

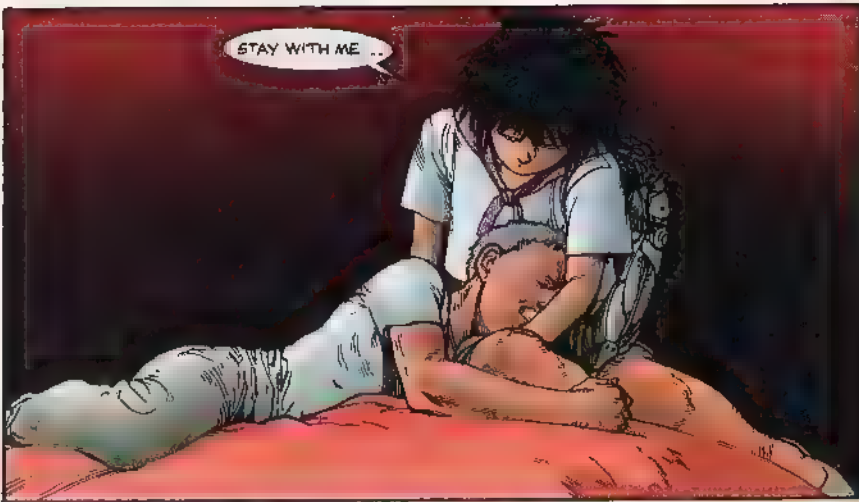
BUT
THINGS
CAN'T
STAY
AS THEY
ARE!

Keen

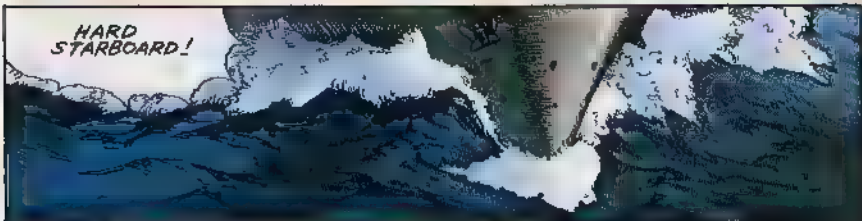
AAUGH!



STAY WITH ME ..

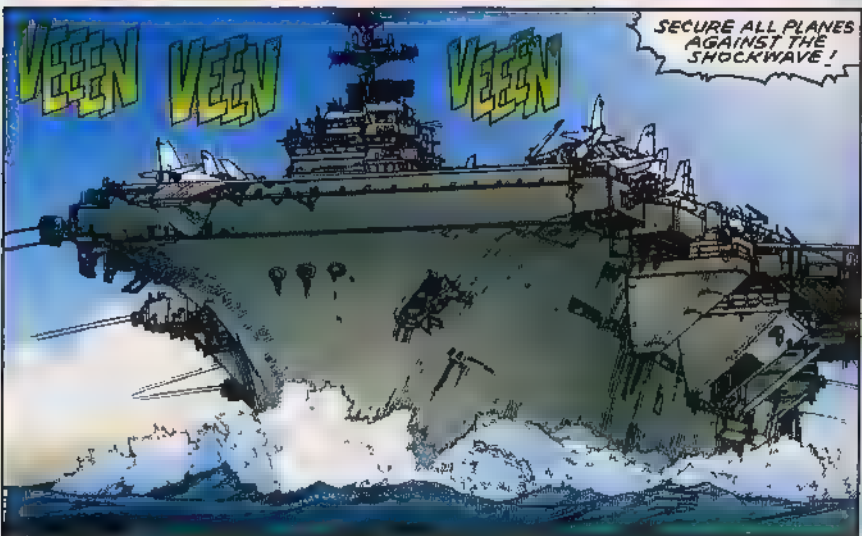


HARD
STARBOARD!



VEEN VEEEN VEEEN

SECURE ALL PLANES
AGAINST THE
SHOCKWAVE!



THERE'S
A TSUNAMI
APPROACHING
THE SHIP!

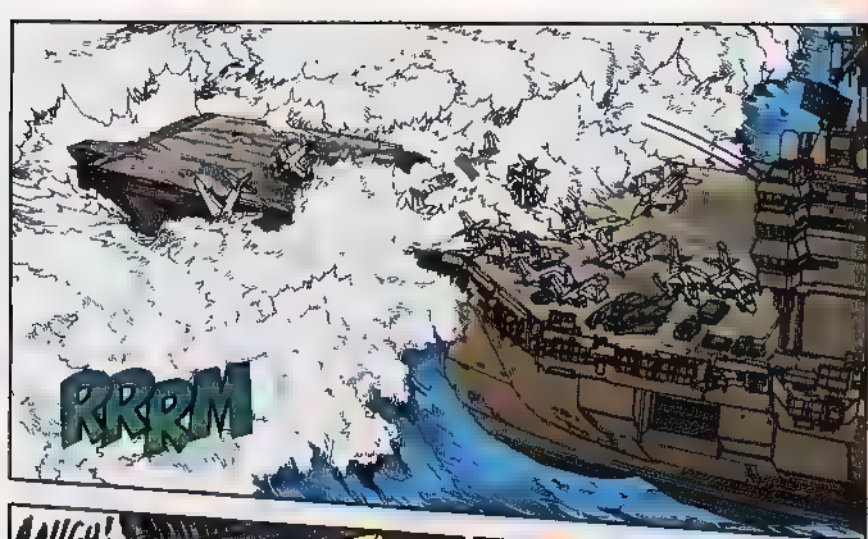
ALL
PLANES MUST
BE SECURED
BEFORE THE
SHOCKWAVE
HITS!

VEE VEE VEE

VEE VEE

drum

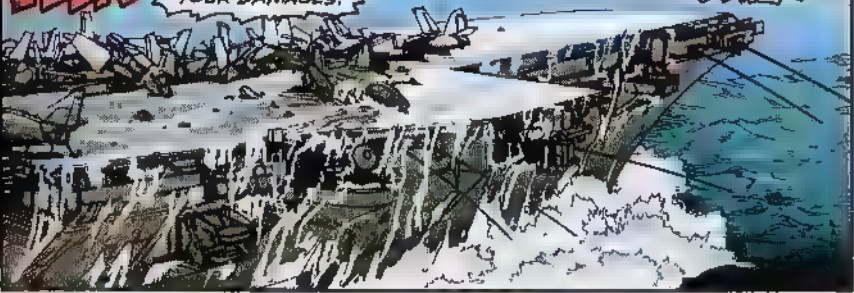
RRRM



VEEN

LIFT THE RED
ALERT! ALL
SECTIONS REPORT
YOUR DAMAGES.

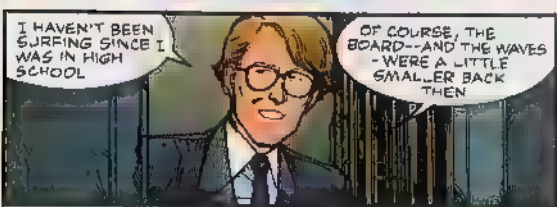
REPEAT! CANCEL
THE RED
ALERT!



IS EVERYONE
ALL RIGHT?

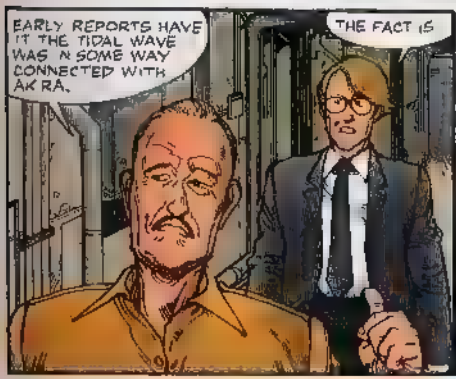


WE'RE FINE,
ADMIRAL.



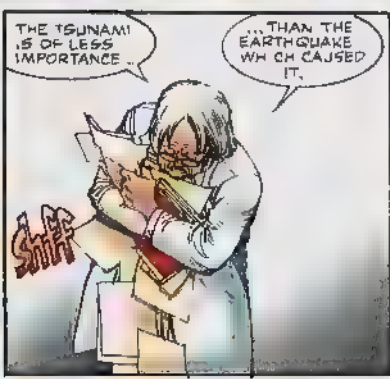
I HAVEN'T BEEN
SURFING SINCE I
WAS IN HIGH
SCHOOL.

OF COURSE, THE
BOARD--AND THE WAVES
--WERE A LITTLE
SMALLER BACK
THEN.



EARLY REPORTS HAVE
IT THE TIDAL WAVE
WAS IN SOME WAY
CONNECTED WITH
AK RA.

THE FACT IS



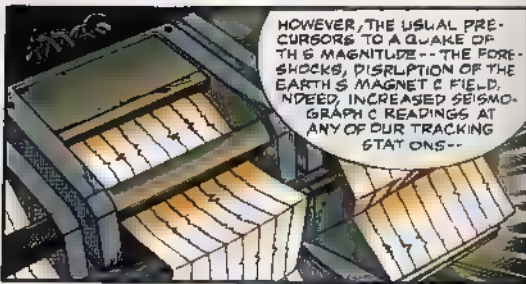
THE TSUNAMI
IS OF LESS
IMPORTANCE.

...THAN THE
EARTHQUAKE
WHICH CAUSED
IT.

THE SEISMIC FOCUS WAS 300 KILOMETERS BELOW NEO-TOKYO'S SURFACE. SHOCKWAVES MEASURE 8.5 ON THE RICHTER SCALE, INDICATING THAT THIS WAS A GREAT QUAKE.



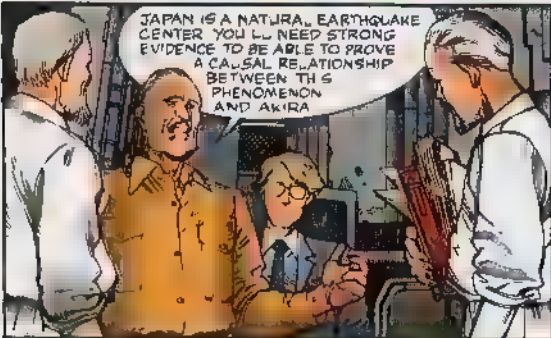
HOWEVER, THE USUAL PRECURSORS TO A QUAKE OF THIS MAGNITUDE -- THE FORESHOCKS, DISRUPTION OF THE EARTH'S MAGNETIC FIELD, INCREASED SEISMOGRAPHIC READINGS AT ANY OF OUR TRACKING STATIONS --



WERE ALL COMPLETELY ABSENT. THIS WAS NOT THE RESULT OF NATURAL STRESSES WITHIN A TECTONIC PLATE. A HUMAN AGENT MAY HAVE BEEN THE CAUSE... OR AN EXPERIMENT GONE AWRY.



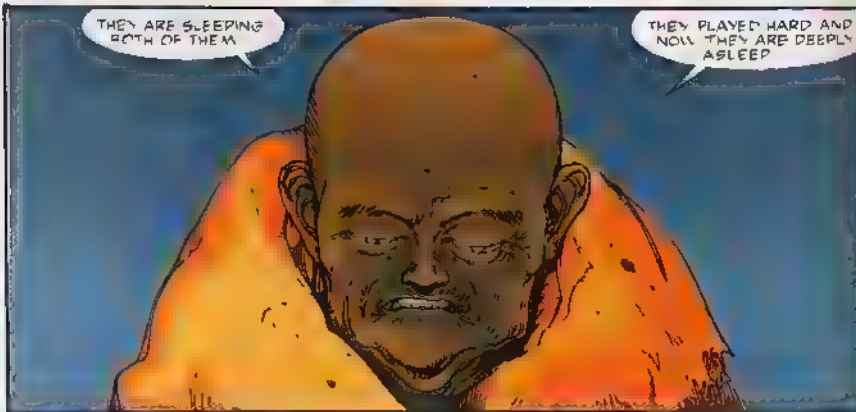
JAPAN IS A NATURAL EARTHQUAKE CENTER. YOU'LL NEED STRONG EVIDENCE TO BE ABLE TO PROVE A CAUSAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS PHENOMENON AND AKIRA.



WHAT'S YOUR OPINION, KARMA TANG?



THEY ARE SLEEPING BOTH OF THEM.



THEY PLAYED HARD AND NOW THEY ARE DEEPLY ASLEEP.

YOU STILL HAVEN'T SAID IF YOU'LL GRANT ME THIS FAVOR

I KNOW YOU'RE CONCERNED FOR HER TOO

SURE I AM

BUT I NEED A FAVOR, TOO!

NAME IT

I'M IN DEBT, AND THAT MEANS TROUBLE!

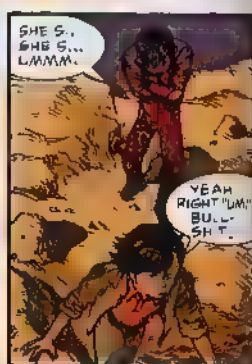
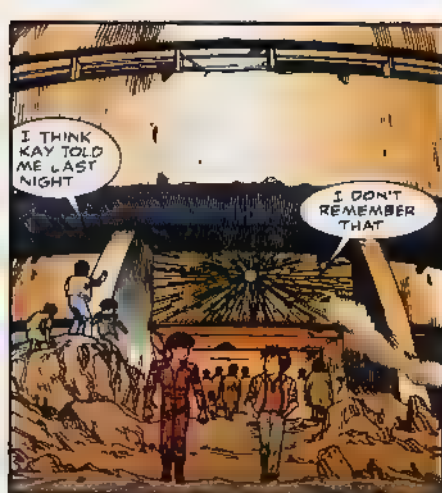
HEH-HEH-HEH!

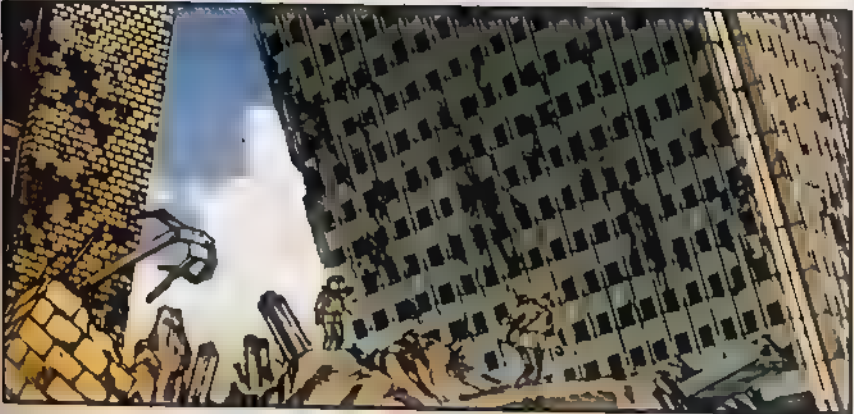
LIKE YOU SAID, SHE'S LADY BOUNTIFUL

I WAS SWEATING BUCKETS

YOU PROMISED TO LOOK FOR KAY

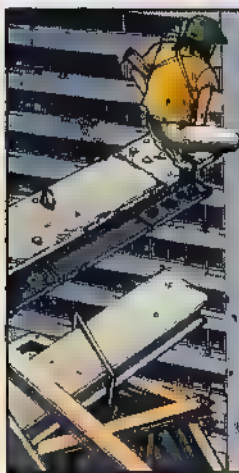
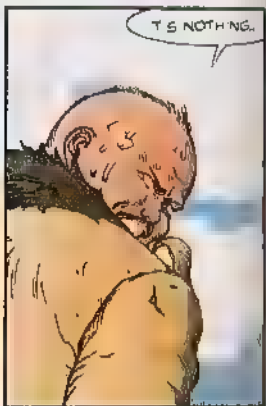
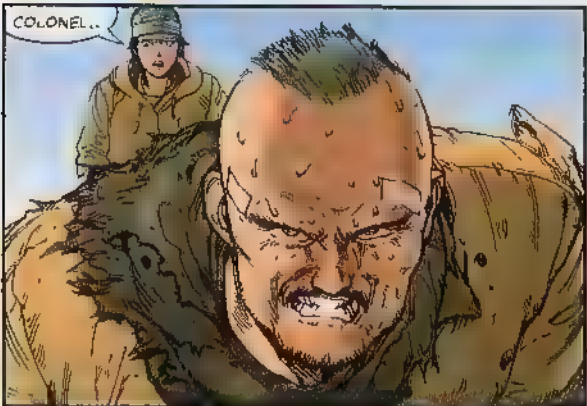
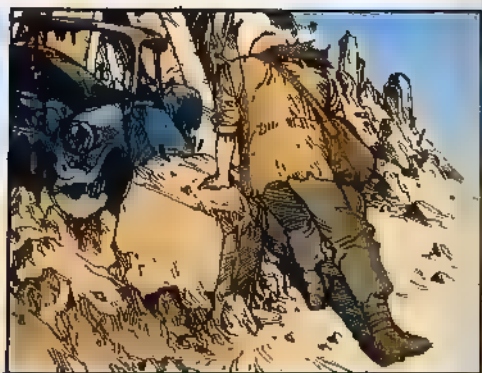
BUT WHERE?



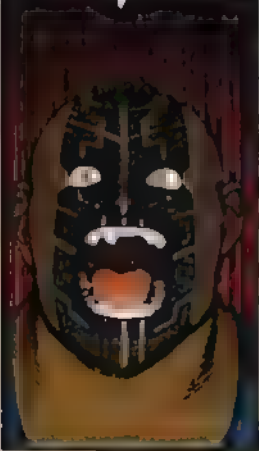


THEY ARE PASSING OUT
OF THE EIGHTH DISTRICT
AND ARE ABOUT TO
INVADE OUR EMPIRE!

WE MUST STRENGTHEN
OUR DEFENSES! WITH
ALL THE MIGHT OF THE
GREAT TOKYO EMPIRE
RANGED AGAINST THEM,
WE HAVE NOTHING
TO FEAR!



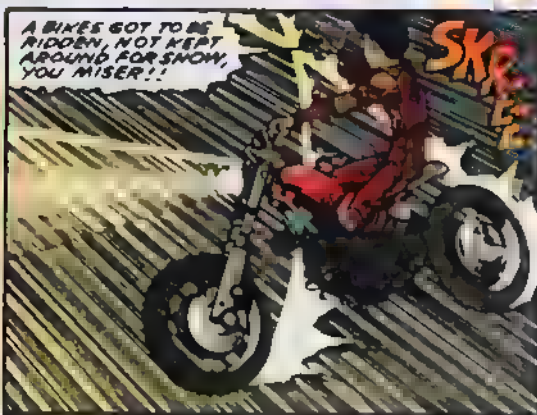
KANEDAA!



THAT BIKE'S NOT FOR
SALE AT ANY PRICE!



A BIKE'S GOT TO BE
RIDDEN, NOT KEPT
AROUND FOR SHOW,
YOU MISER!!

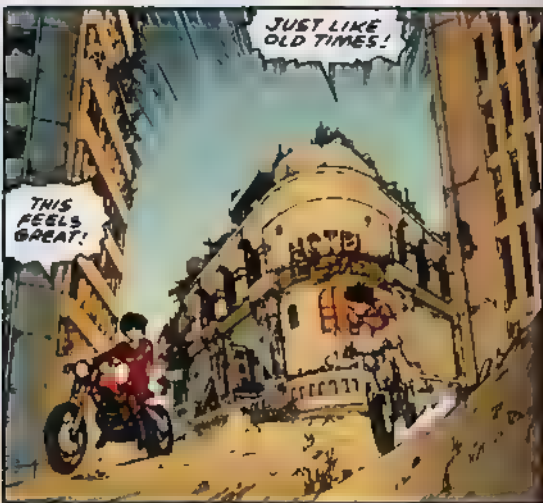
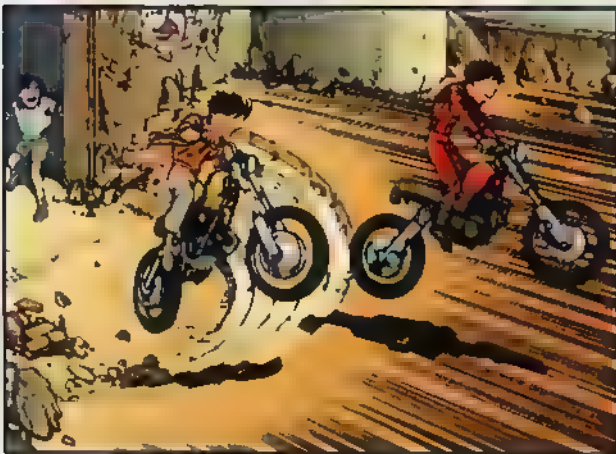


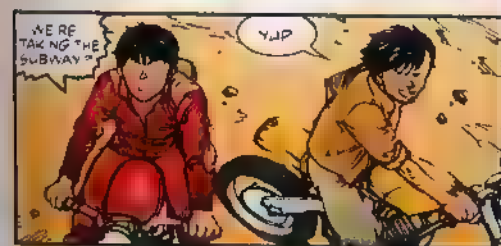
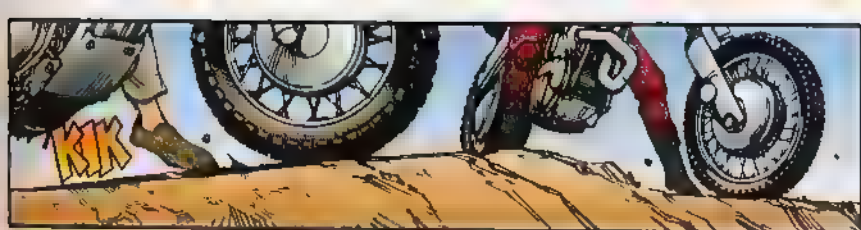
DO YOU KNOW
WHAT THAT
MOTORCYCLE
COST ME?

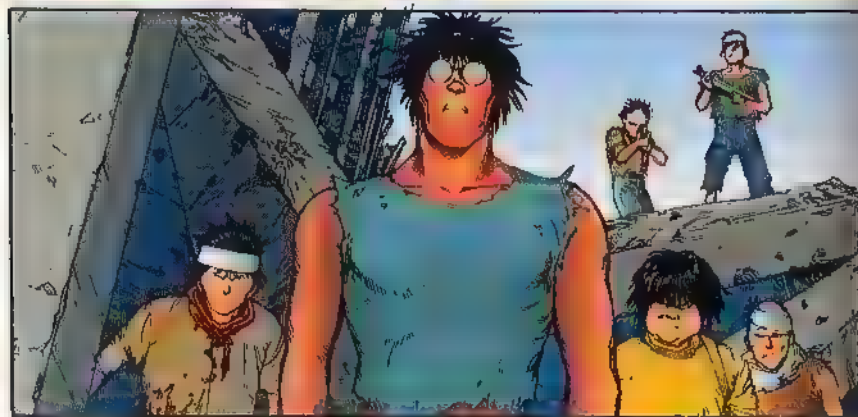
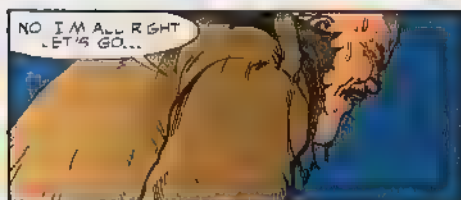


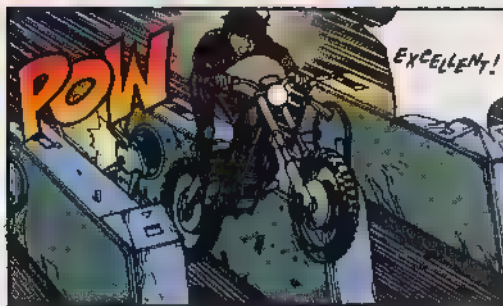
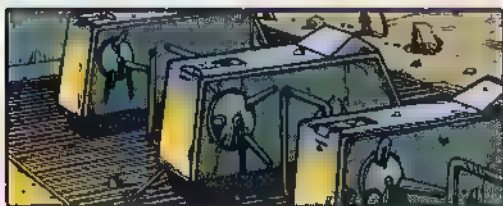
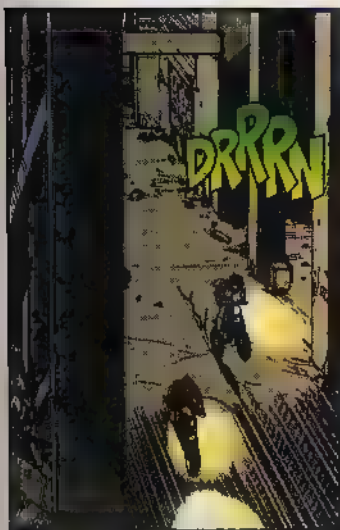
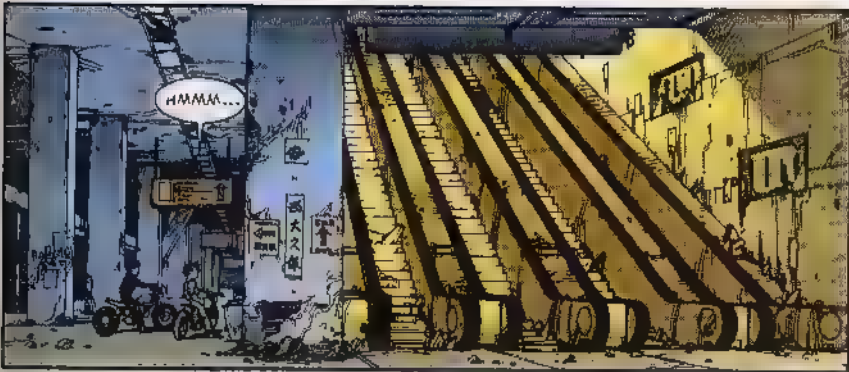
HEY!

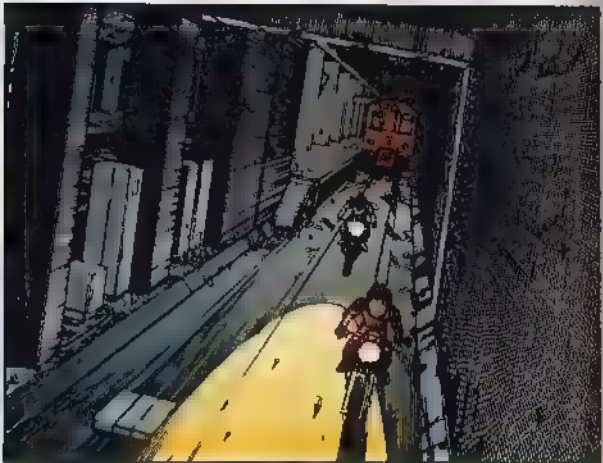
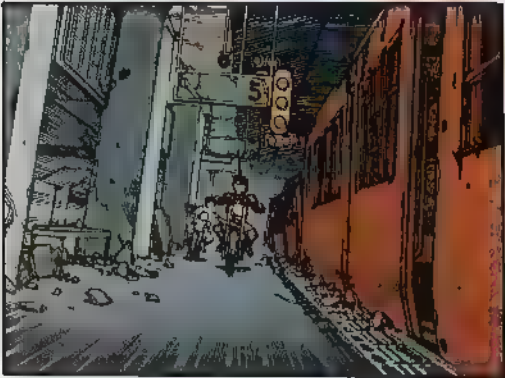
GANGWAY!

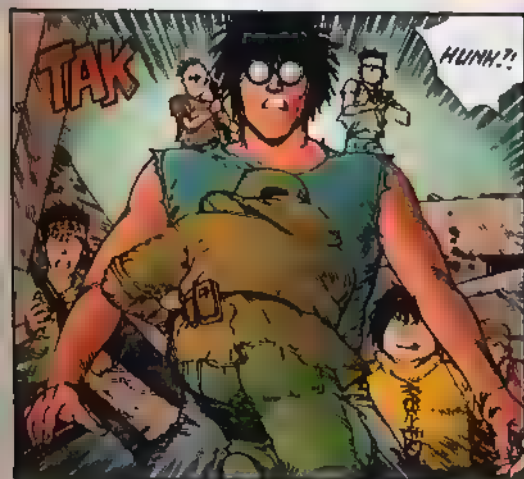
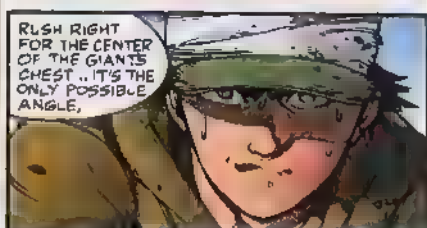
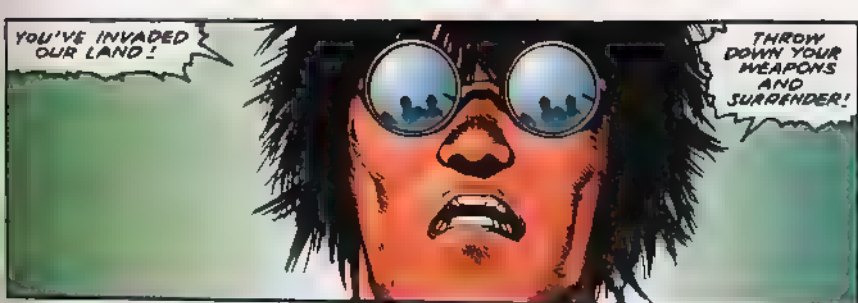


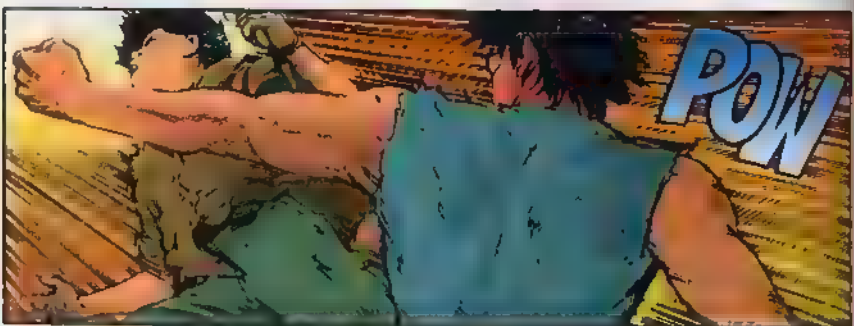
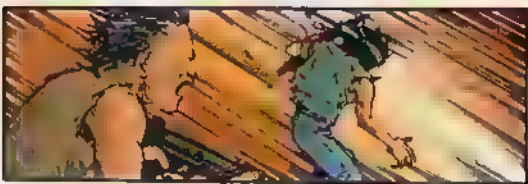
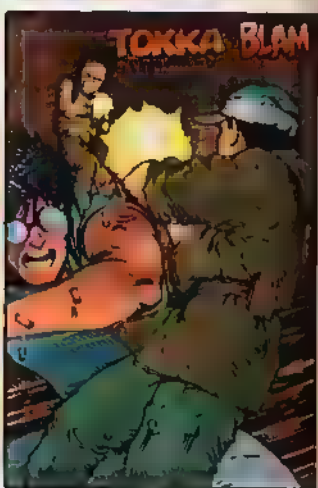
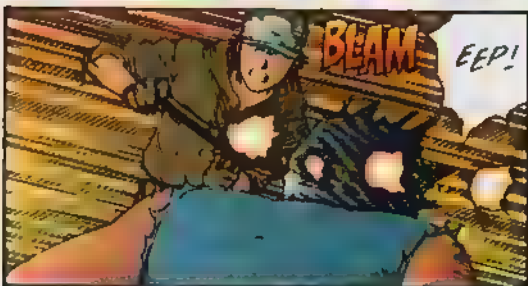
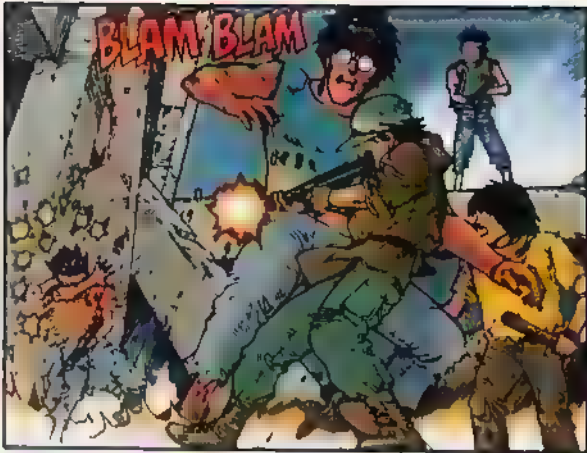




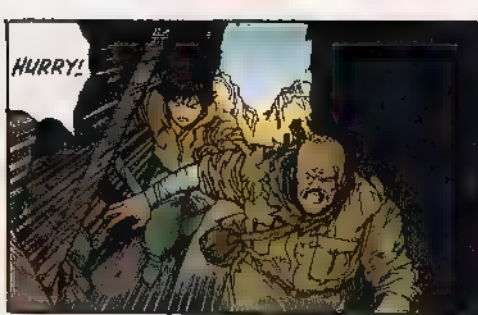


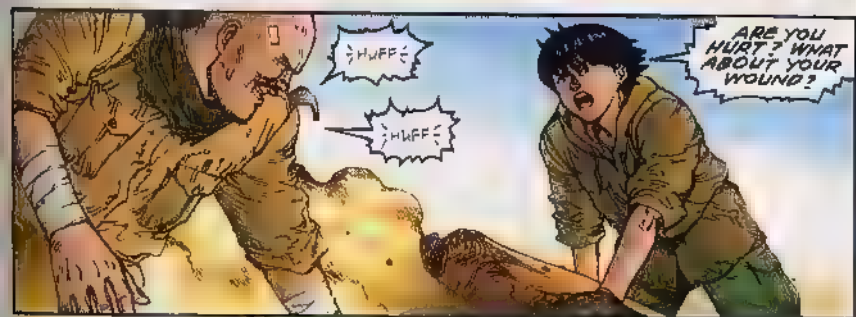
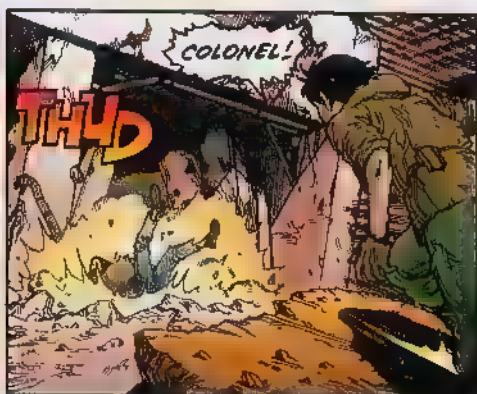
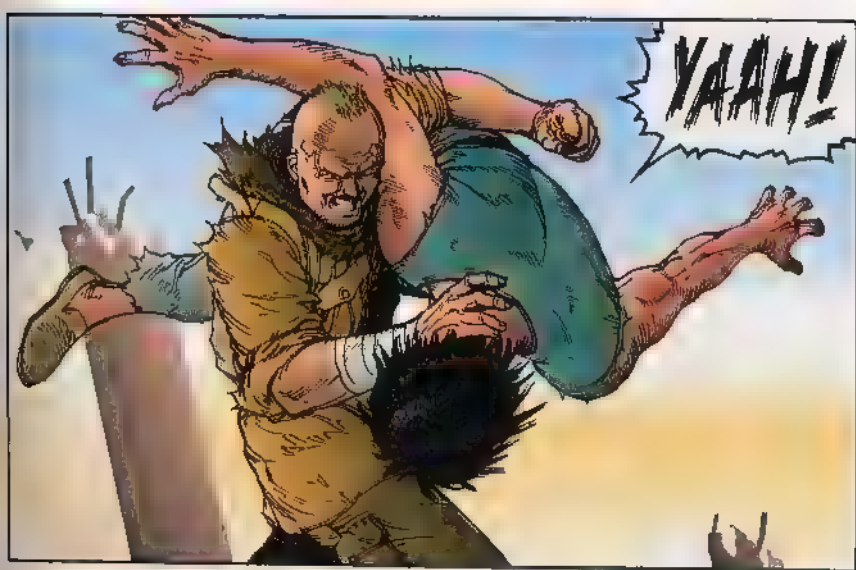


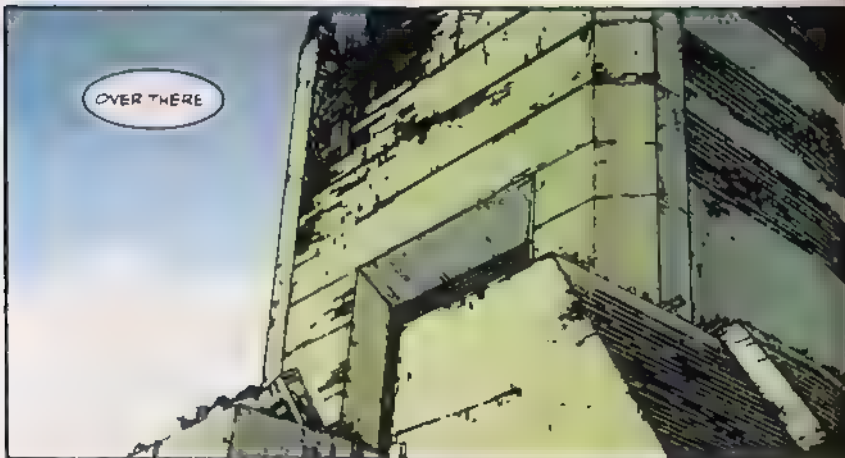
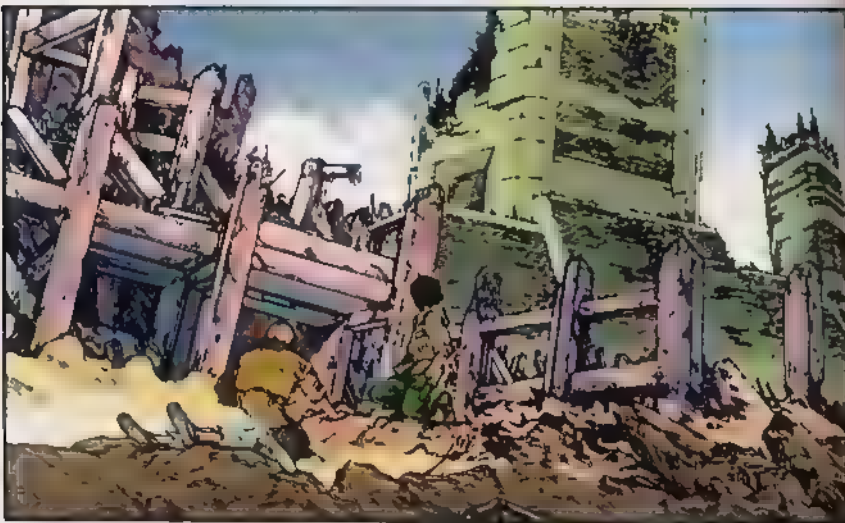


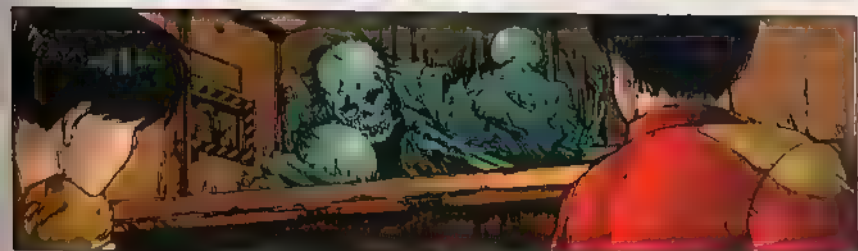
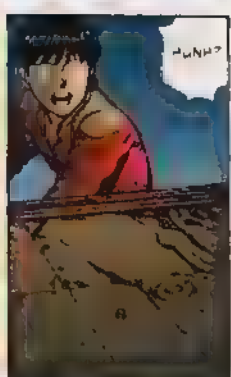


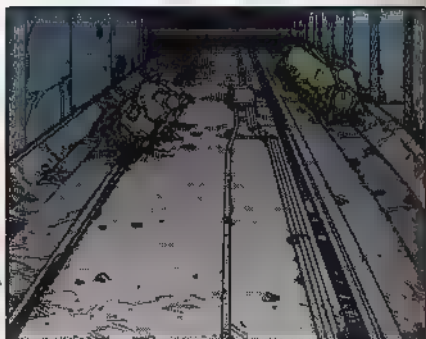
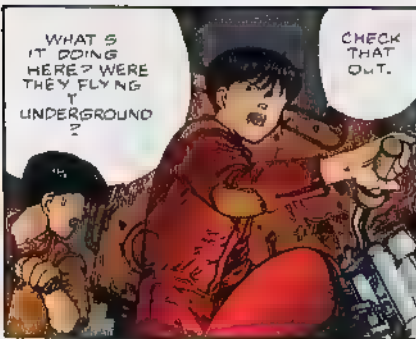
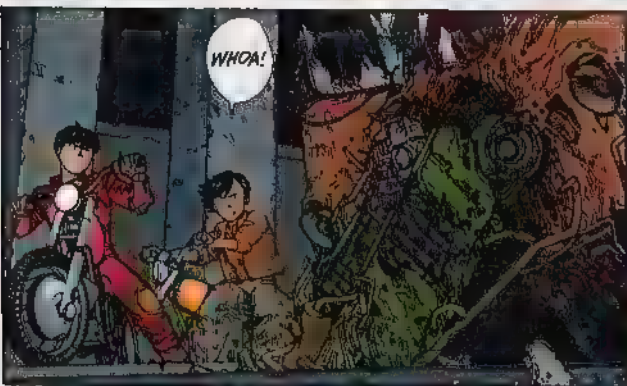
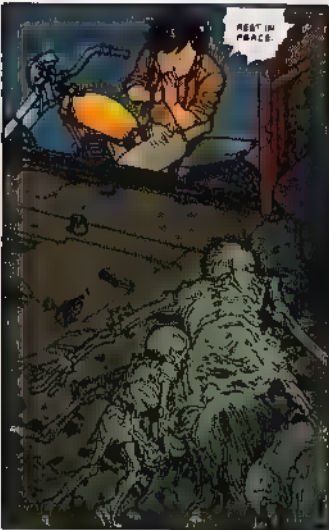


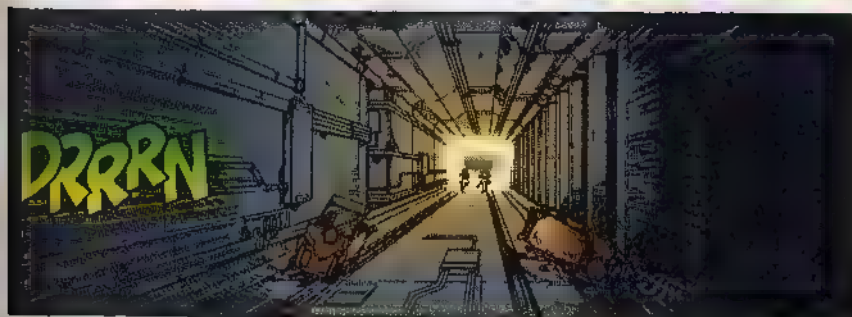
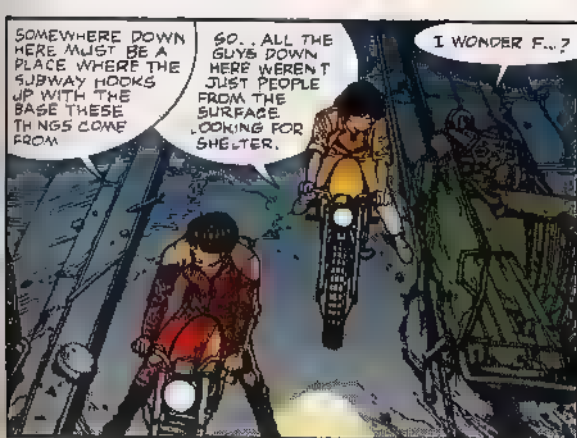


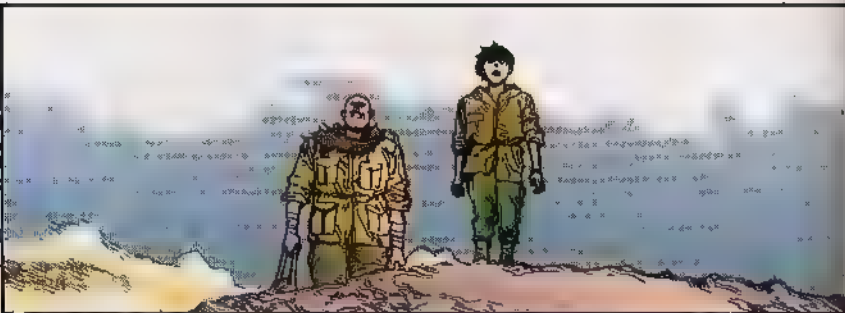












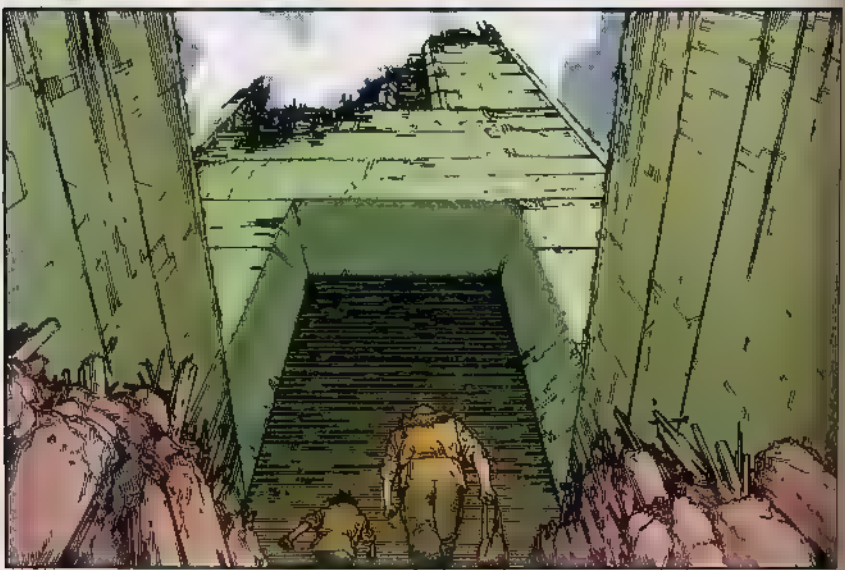
THIS S...

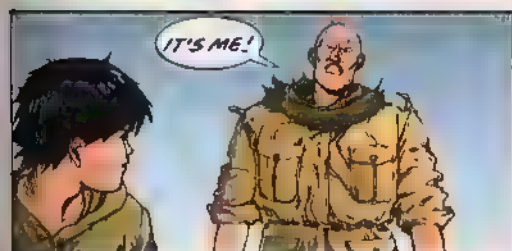
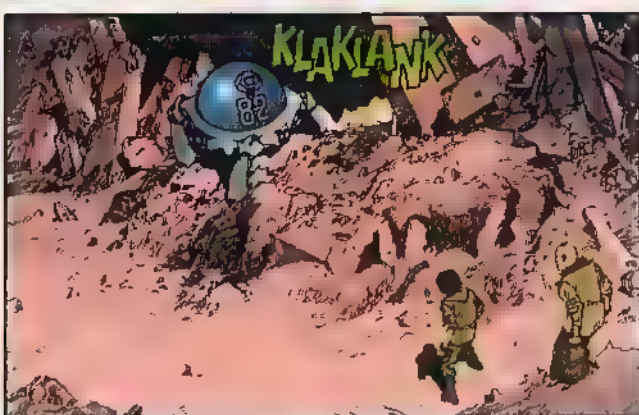
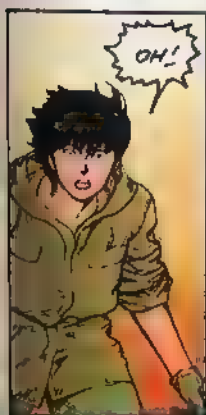
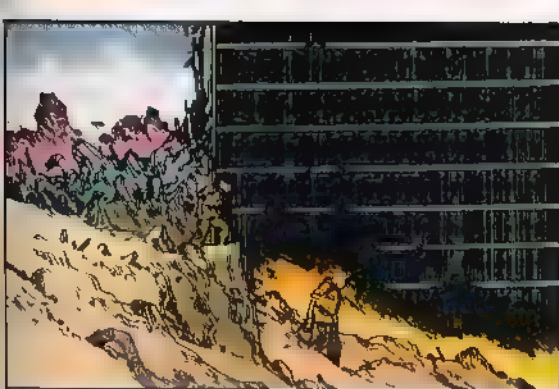


YOU'VE
BEEN HERE
BEFORE,
HAVEN'T
YOU?



YEAH





YOU'VE GOT
T VERY WELL-
TRA NED



IT'S EQUIPPED
W TH A VOICE-PRNT
RESPONSE
MECHANISM



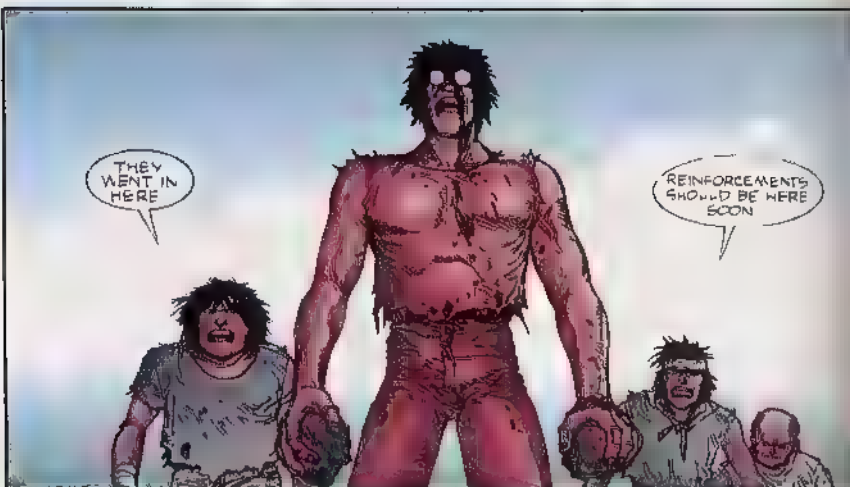
LET'S
HURRY



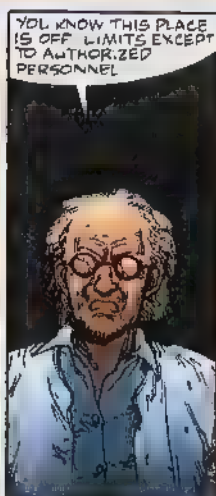
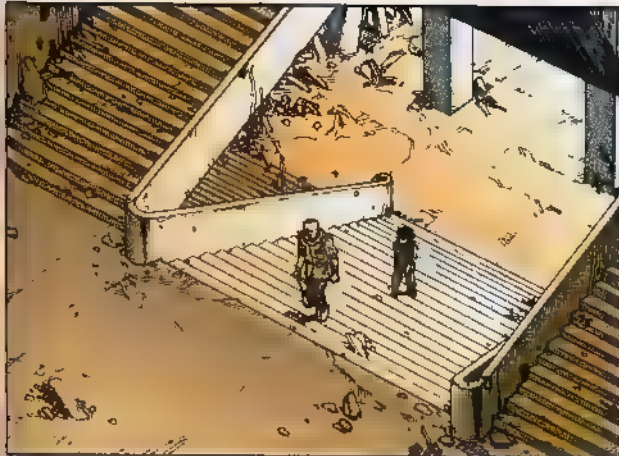
SKUFF

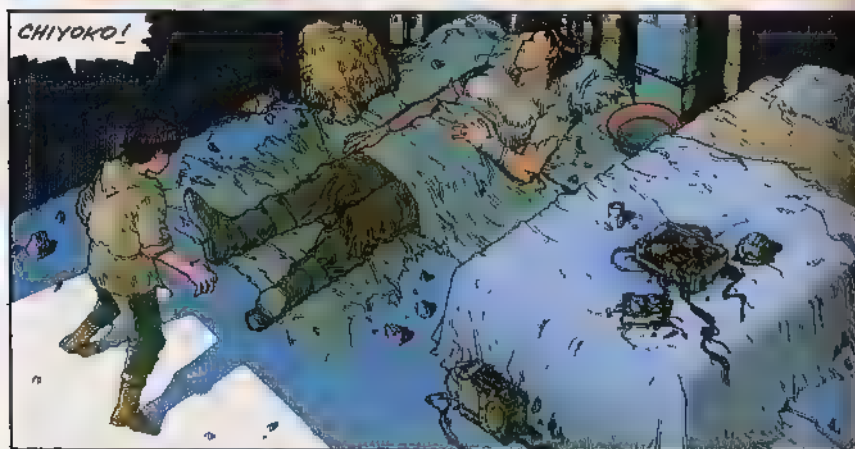
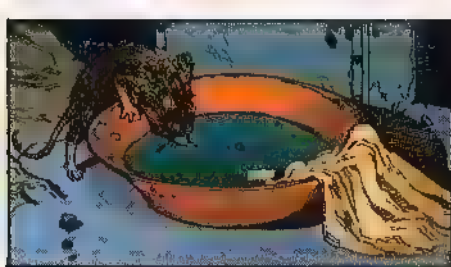


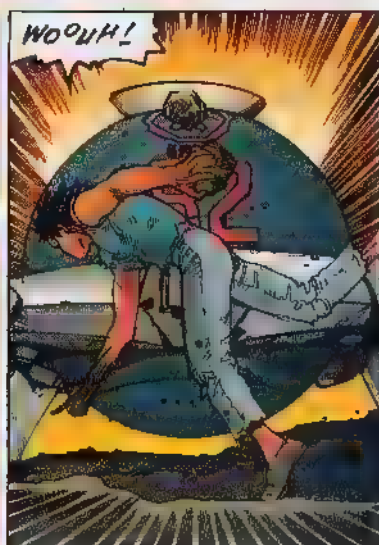
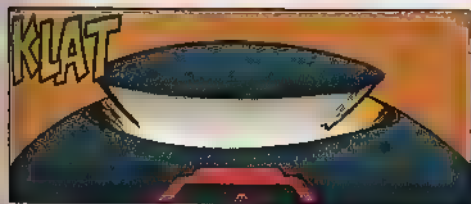
THEY
WENT IN
HERE

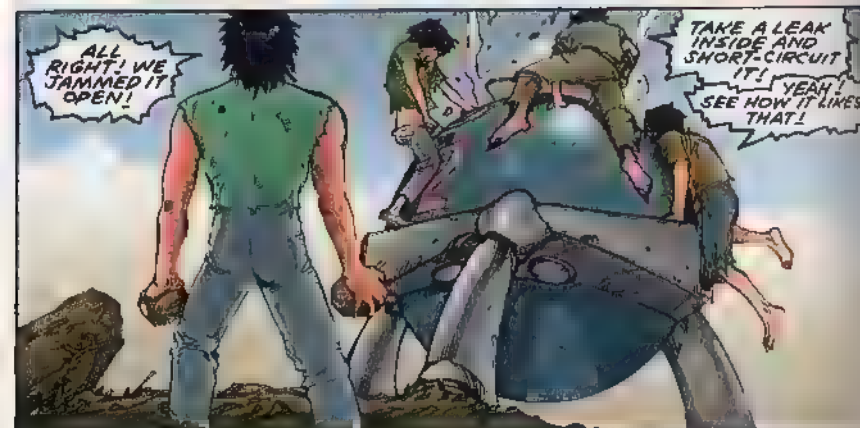
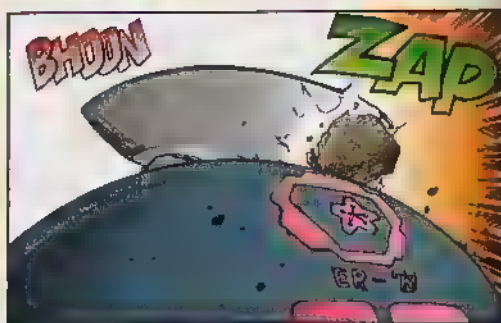


REINFORCEMENTS
SHOULD BE HERE
SOON











DRRRR

ARE YOU GONNA JUST KEEP
GOING TILL WE DROWN?

THE WATER
DOESN'T GET
ANY DEEPER
THAN THIS!

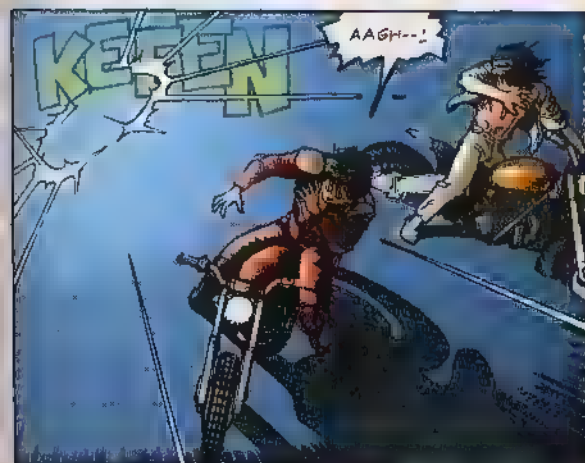
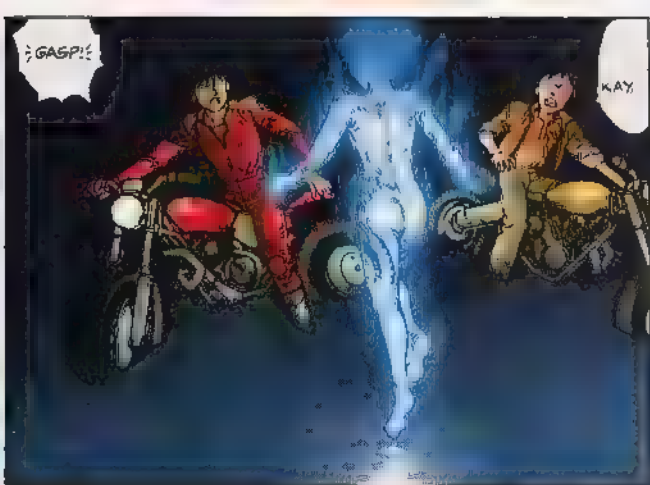
WHAT IS
THAT?


HUNH?

KAY?!?


KEEE








YOU SAW IT,
TOO, DIDN'T
YOU? IT WAS
KAY, RIGHT?



SHE WALKED
RIGHT THROUGH
YOU



HOW FAR ARE
WE FROM THE
EXIT?


CLOSE



THEN
LET'S
GO.

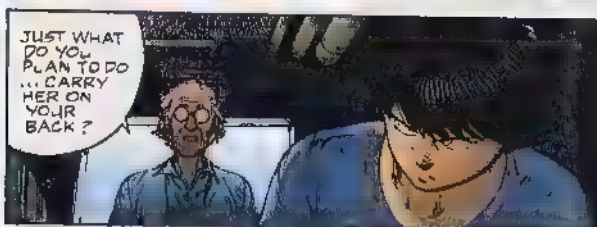


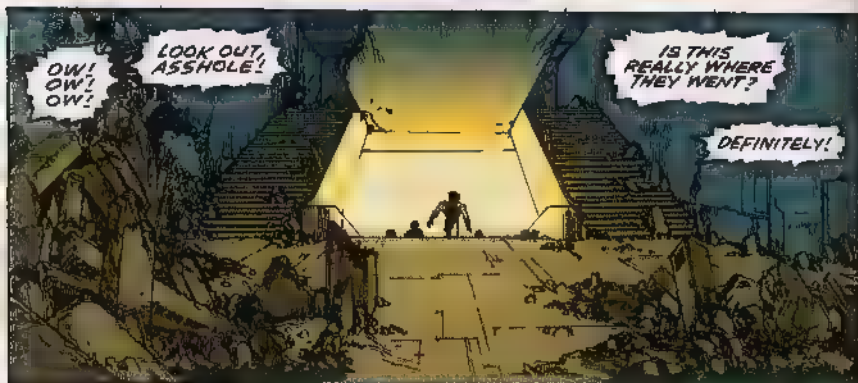
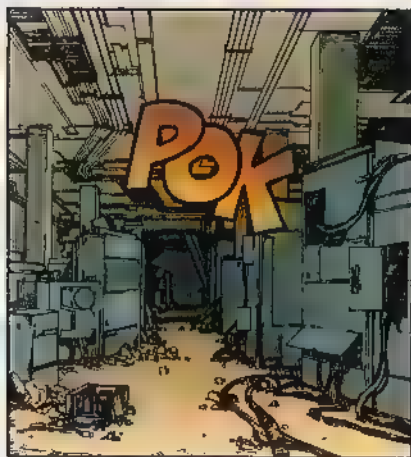
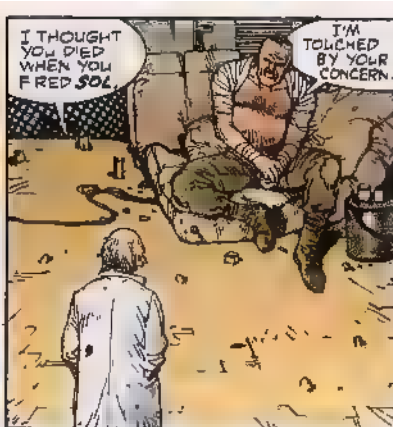
DRRN

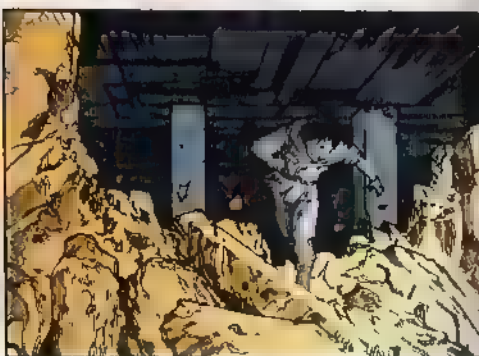
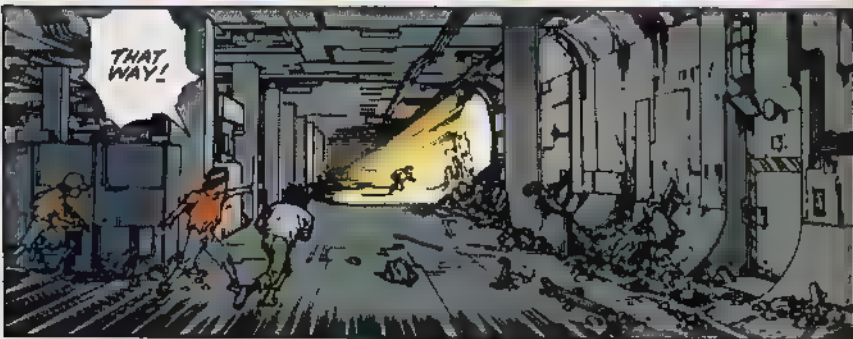
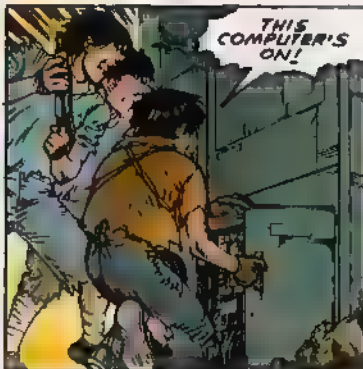


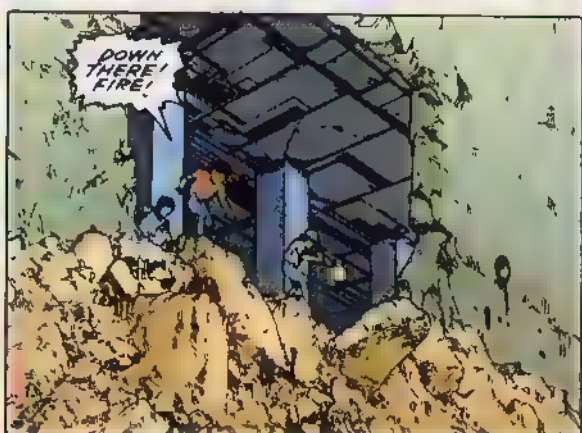
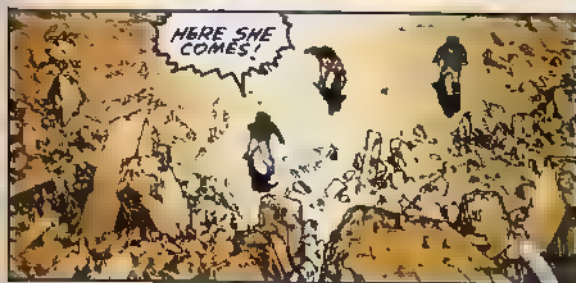
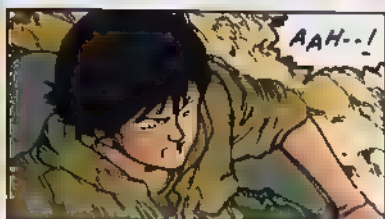
I HOPE
NOTHING
BAD'S
HAPPENED
TO HER.

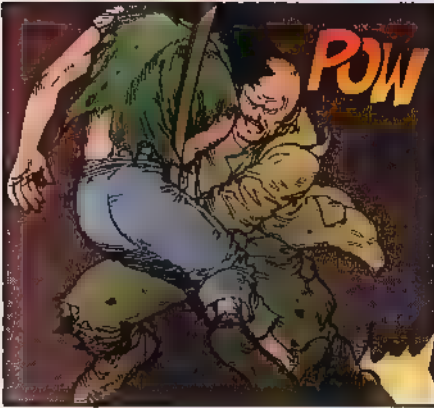
WE'LL SEE
SOON
ENOUGH.

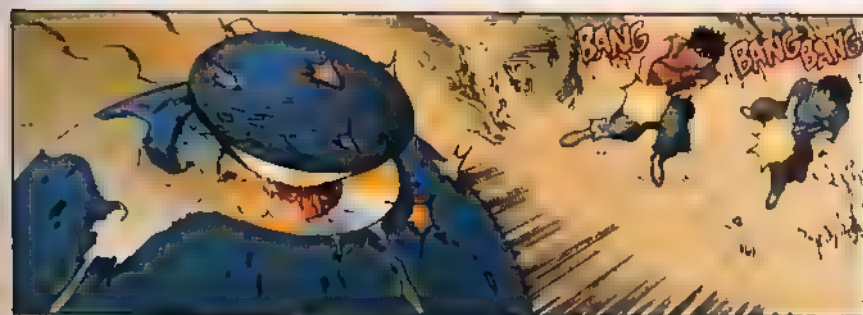
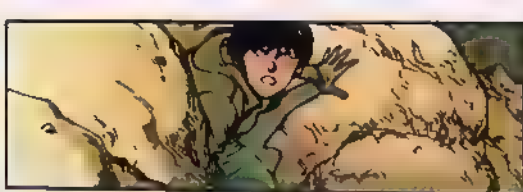


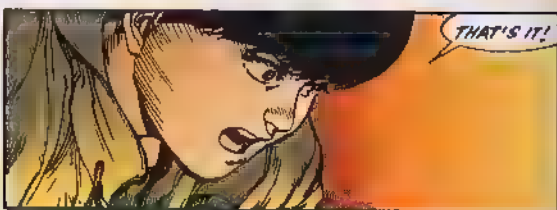
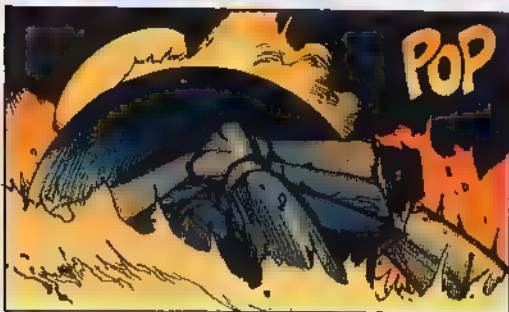
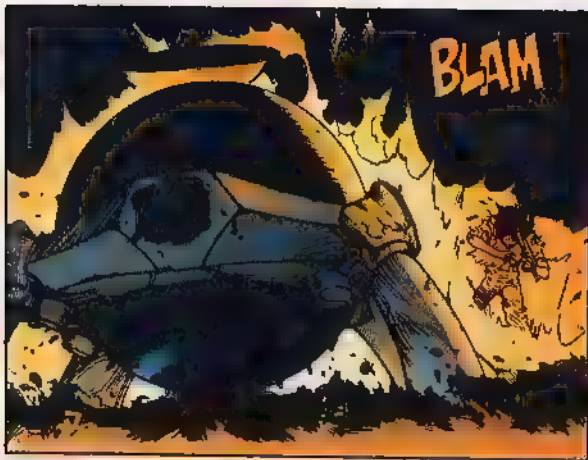








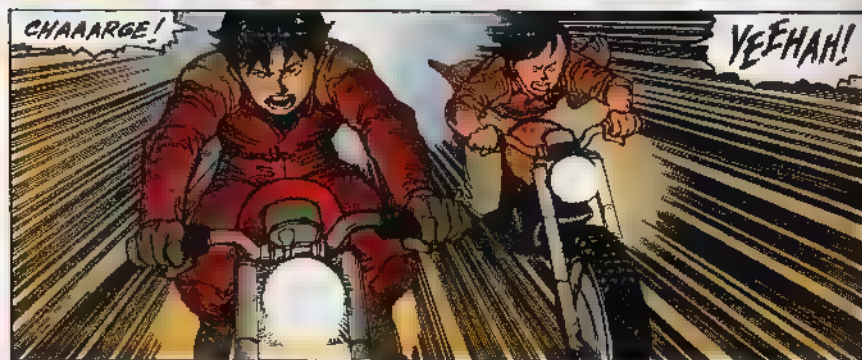




THAT'S
THE EXIT, DEAD
AHEAD!

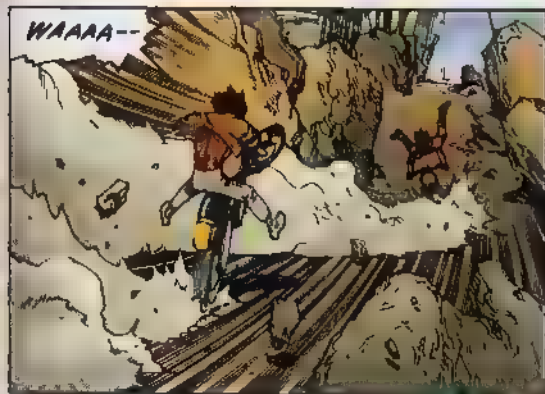
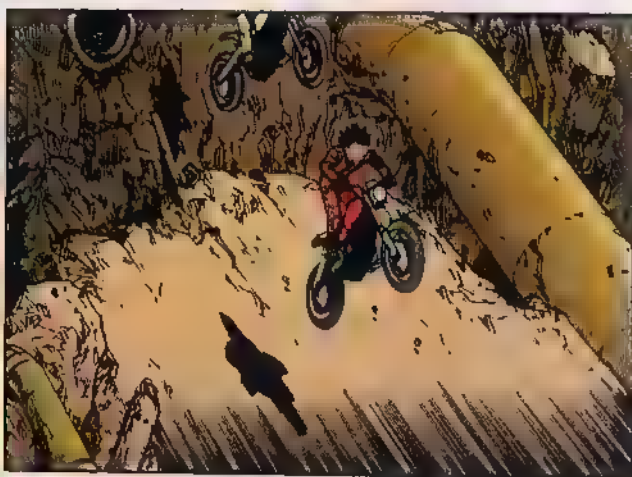
SKREEE

OOOPS!



OH--!

BOP



WAAAA--

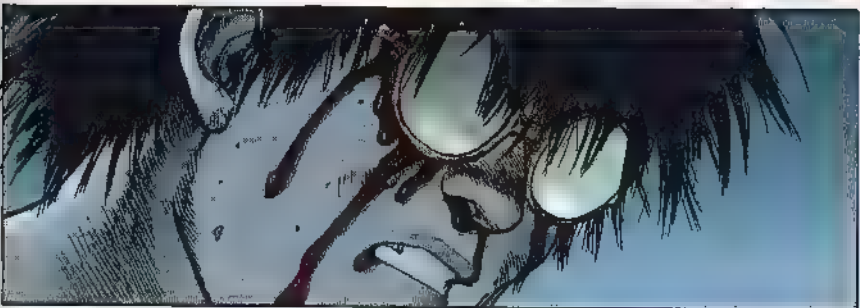
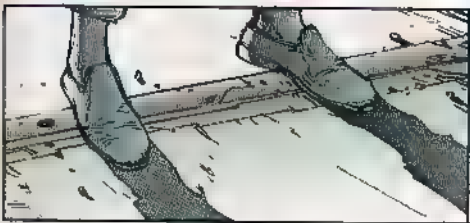


--AAA--

--AAA--

--HAAN!!





NEXT ISSUE: **ASSASSINATION CORPS!**

Upcoming **AKIRA** dates include:

ANN ARBOR, MI
MICHIGAN THEATER
September 28-30

INDIANAPOLIS, IN
IRVING THEATER
September 28-October 4

TEMPE, AZ
VALLEY ART THEATER
October 12-18

EUGENE, OR
BIJOU THEATER
October 12-18

NEW YORK, NY
THE NEW FILM FORUM
begins October 18

PROVIDENCE, RI
AVON CINEMA
November 30-December 6

RHINEBECK, NY
UPSTATE THEATER
October 26-November 1

ATHENS, GA
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
October 26-27

HONOLULU, HI
ACADEMY THEATER
October 27-28

CHARLESTON, WV
CAPITAL PLAZA MUSIC HALL
October 30

LOS ANGELES AREA
MONTCLAIR, CA
GENERAL CINEMA
November 3-4

LANSING, MI
ODEON THEATER
November 2-8

MIAMI, FL
BEAUMONT THEATER
November 8-15

ALBUQUERQUE, NM
SUB THEATER at the UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
November 15-17

PHILADELPHIA, PA
ROXY SCREENING ROOM
December 7-19

DETROIT, MI
DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS
December 14-16

Also, check your local specialty or art theater listings for the **AKIRA** playdates nearest you.



KATSUHIRO OTOMO

writer/illustrator

YASUMITSU SUETAKE

chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

MAKOTO SHIOSAKI

SATOSHI TAKABATAKE

assistants to Mr. Otomo

HIROSHI HIRATA

designer • AKIRA calligraphy

AKIRA SAITO

designer • Kodansha edition

Kodansha Ltd

YOKO UMEZAWA

with **LINDA M. YORK**

translation

KOICHI YURI

editor • Kodansha edition

YUKA ANDO

editorial coordinator • Tokyo

NORIYUKI OKAZAKI

managing editor • New York

Epic Comics

JO DUFFY

english adaptation

STEVE OLIFF

with the

OLYOPTICS COMPUTER CREW

colorists

MICHAEL HIGGINS

letterer

MARIE JAVINS

managing editor

MARCUS MCLAURIN

editor

CARL POTTS

executive editor

It begins with the sudden and mysterious quake that rocks Tokyo, the very Earth turning betrayer in a display of bullying might. It grows in a sweep of passion, sending Kay on a dangerous search for Chiyoko, with Kaneda in a no less harrowing pursuit of Kay. And it thunders out of control in the madness that drives a giant's blood soaked rampage.

They are all natural forces at play in the city this day, roiling and unpredictable powers battering the survivors from without and within. And like all natural forces, these are destined to run their course . . . and when they have, who can say what will remain?

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA



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X-FUTURE

I love um

I buy um

I preserve um